

## **Power of being prayed for?**

### **Have you discovered the power of being prayed for?**

We often encourage people from the front and in written articles to pray, but we don't often encourage people to get prayed for. This is just as important: for while it's vital to have our own communication with the Lord as an open channel, we can also receive much blessing from having others pray for us.

It can be hard to be vulnerable and ask others to pray. And even harder to be specific about what we want prayer for. So we tend to play it safe and only ask for prayer for our sick Auntie or our grandson's exams, as this doesn't reveal any of our inner struggles. If pushed, we might reveal a back ache or some test results we're waiting for, as long as the illness isn't one that we deem too private or embarrassing! And if none of those conditions exist, when someone says, "Is there anything I can pray for you?" we answer, "No, I'm fine thank you."

**What?** We're **fine**, not receiving the incredible blessing that God might want to pour out on us today? We're **fine**, shutting out the ways he wants to speak to us, reassure us, challenge us and use us in his plans for the world: the God of the universe who is concerned intimately for you, numbers the hairs on your head, saw you in the unformed depths before you came to be? Yes, we're fine, running our lives our way and keeping God at arm's length. Until life comes crashing down in some way that we can't fix, oh, and suddenly we get the point of God.

So the next time someone asks you, "Would you like me to pray for you?" let the answer be YES!!! And when they ask, "What can I pray for you?" and you can't think of anything specific, then the first thing to ask for is a grateful heart that there are no current crises! And the second is to ask that God will reveal more of his love, his wisdom and his peace into your life, being confident that His ways are higher and better than ours in every single area of our lives, and that we are inviting heaven to come down and guide us towards blessing a thousand times greater than we could ever organise or manufacture for ourselves.

We often identify that those in poor communities are much better at praying and much more faithful than us. Surely that's because they can't rely on the things we use to keep God as a spare, only to get out in time of emergency. These things are our jobs, homes, money, the security of our society, our education, our emergency services and health system, our functioning utilities and transport. Take those away and you will soon be on your knees.

John writes, "This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us - whatever we ask - we know that we have what we asked of him." 1 John 5:14-15.

And when someone else approaches the throne of God for you, then you receive a double blessing, knowing that they are kind enough to spend their time and energy on your behalf!

### **Ways to be prayed for at Christ Church Downend:**

Every Monday morning at Morning Prayer we pray for four people or families who are in the Church Directory or address book (which is another good reason to be in there!) You are also welcome to join us for this time of prayer at 9.15 -9.45 am in the Youth Hub. In advance of the date that your name will come up, Maggie Nichols sends out an email asking if there is anything you would like prayer for So do give us specific ways we can bless you and those you love right now, by replying to the message. As at 5/2/18 we are somewhere in "T" in the alphabet so that will give you a clue about how soon you might get the request!) Of course,

you don't have to wait until your name comes round, you can always send prayer requests to any of the clergy or ministry heads at any time.

### **Prayer at church services**

You can ask for someone to pray for you after any service, either the people near you, the people you came with, or the people leading the service. At the 10.30 service, while we are at the school hall there will be 2 people waiting "by the wall bars" opposite the entrance.

### **Prayer Link**

You can email Mary Freestone [ianandmaryfreestone@gmail.com](mailto:ianandmaryfreestone@gmail.com) with any urgent requests which then get shared with a team by phone or email. Just indicate whether the request is confidential or not, as confidential ones get kept to a small team, whereas non-confidential ones could be shared by those leading prayers in services for example.

### **Prayer Ministry**

If you would like more extended times of being prayed for, by two experienced people, please contact Pauline Pearce at [paulinepearce@aol.com](mailto:paulinepearce@aol.com) or ask at the office and they can pass on your details.

### **Frontline Prayer**

Every month we pray for a section of the congregation, divided up according to the kind of work they do or their current situation in life such as carer, full time parenting, retired, student etc. Each month we send out a request to all those we know to be in the relevant group, asking, What can we pray for you right now? So do respond, and if you don't receive the email, get in touch with Anita Dobson [anitadobson@christchurchdownend.com](mailto:anitadobson@christchurchdownend.com) to make sure you get on the list. Here are the areas for prayer for each month:

Jan	Healthcare and Caring in Community, Animal welfare
Feb	Emergency Services and Charities
Mar	Retired and Home-makers
Apr	IT and Environment
May	Finance and Unemployment
Jun	Manufacturing and Engineering Industries
Jul	Retail Sales and Administration
Aug	Media and the Arts
Sep	Education and Childcare
Oct	Agriculture & Fishing
Nov	Social services and Council
Dec	Hospitality and Catering

There are many other more informal and just as vital ways to ask for prayer, especially if you are in a Life Group – a small group such as a home group or prayer triplet, as asking those you know well to pray for you is very powerful and usually a lot easier. That's why small groups are so vital. (But that's a whole other blog!)